

# News and Notes of Music and the Drama

## A Great Russian Responds to The Appeals of His Compatriots

**Rachmaninoff to Play for the Benefit of Russia's Musicians, Composers, Artists and Men of Letters**

By Katharine Wright

Only a matter of grave importance induces Sergei Rachmaninoff to permit his privacy to be invaded by interviewers. The great Russian does not court publicity. Instead he allows music to speak for him, his music and his consummate art as a pianist. So we were delighted with the prospect of a rare pleasure when Joseph Robie, the urbane press representative of the New York Symphony Society, said to us as we gloomily escaped from one of last week's commonplace recitals by a singer or a pianist whose name and accomplishments have happily passed from memory:

"Mr. Rachmaninoff would like to see you, and you know he never sees people from the papers."

We were delighted, but also a trifle perturbed. We admit the charge of being a hero worshiper. In the presence of greatness the most carefully planned questions vanish from our consciousness. Instead we are annoyingly aware of weak knees, a faltering tongue and vivid remembrance of an admonition often heard in far distant days of childhood—something about being seen and not heard.

We had interviewed Rachmaninoff before, soon after his arrival in America three years ago. He was then worn and sad, fresh from tragedies lived through in his country, from which he had fled with Mme. Rachmaninoff and two little daughters. He spoke bitterly and with scorn of Bolshevik Russia, where, he said, it was as much a crime to be educated as it was to wear a clean collar. The somberness of his mood was invincible. Nothing roused him, not even a passing reference to the enthusiasm of the evening before, when he had been recognized and acclaimed in a concert hall after a performance of his Second Symphony. At that time it was almost impossible to reconcile the emotionalism of his music—the emotionalism which is the keynote of the Russian nature—with the composer's overwhelming austerity.

Three years in America, however, have cheered Rachmaninoff. Here he has found comfort and peace of mind and appreciation. But he does not forget Russia, and it is in the cause of Russia that he has turned to the press.

We found him in his beautiful home on Riverside Drive, at the piano, with his younger daughter, Miss Tania, an interested and devoted listener. The little girl had been asked to stay in the room to act as interpreter. She fled when it was decided to carry on the conversation in French. However, although Rachmaninoff preferred to rely upon Miss Tania's conversational powers rather than upon his own, it is no secret that he speaks, reads and writes English.

Sitting down at his desk, he took out a printed circular of the concert he

will give next Sunday evening at Carnegie Hall, with the assistance of the New York Symphony Orchestra.

"The entire proceeds," he said, "will be given to the American Relief Administration for the benefit of Russian musicians, composers, artists and men of letters."

"Appeals for help have come to me not only from individuals but from members and employees of leading institutions of learning and art. These

appeals include letters from the Moscow Conservatory of Music, the Moscow Philharmonic Society, the University of Moscow for Men and the University of Moscow for Women, the Institute of Technology, the School of Engineering, the Moscow Art School, the Agricultural School, the Grand Opera, the National Theater and the Art Theater.

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"It is impossible for me to carry on two kinds of work at one and the same time," he said. "I must finish one season of my contract. Then I shall not appear in public for a year, but will spend all my time in composing. And I hope to spend that year in America, where every one has been so kind to my family and to me. In fact, America is the only country where it is now possible to live. I look upon it as my second mother country."

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Theater and conservatory also are in need of funds."

The expenses of this concert will be defrayed by Mr. Rachmaninoff, who will play his second and third concertos. In addition, the orchestra will play the Andante from Tchaikovsky's String Quartet and the Scherzo from the Pathetic Symphony.

Whether it was the warmth of his appeal that moved us or the anticipation of hearing him play both concertos in the same evening or the desire to be of some service, however slight, to the country of Puschkin and Stasoff, of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy, of Glinka and Rimsky-Korsakoff, of Rachmaninoff himself, and of the greatest living operatic artist, Feodor Chaliapine, we do not know, probably it was all three, but at any rate we immediately handed Mr. Rachmaninoff half of all our money.

Speaking of his own work, Rach-

### Sergei Rachmaninoff



Russian composer-pianist who will give a concert to aid his countrymen next Sunday evening

to the Legion's unemployed and their families.

Assisting artists will be Miss Ellen Dalassy and Miss Marion Teiva, both from the Metropolitan Opera Company. An orchestra from the Metropolitan Opera House will also assist. Giuseppe Bambaschek will conduct.

The second Brooklyn appearance this season of Sergei Rachmaninoff, under Institute auspices, will take place tomorrow evening at the Academy. The program will be as follows: Sonata, Op. 90 (Beethoven); Papillons (Schumann); barcarolle, valse, polonaise (Chopin); Two Fairy Stories (Medtner); two études tableaux (Rachmaninoff); minuet (Bisetti-Rachmaninoff); rhapsodie No. 2 (Liszt, with cadenza by Rachmaninoff).

To-night's "Opera Concert"

Erwin Nylregyhazi, Hungarian pianist, will play at to-night's opera concert Liszt's concerto No. 1 in E flat minor and a group of solos. Miss Yvonne d'Arle will sing "Depuis le jour," from "Louise"; Miss Anne Roselle, "O Patria mia," from "Aida"; Miss Raymonde Delaunoy, Duparc's "Invitation au Voyage"; Miss Augusta Lenska, "Mon cœur souvre a tavezol," from "Samson et Dalila"; George Meader, "Il mio tesoro," from "Don Giovanni"; Johannes Sembach, "O Paradiso," from "L'Africaine"; Carl Schlegel, "The Evening Star," from "Tannhäuser." The orchestra, directed by Mr. Pelletier, will play Berlioz's "Carnaval Romain," Saint Saëns's "Marche Heroïque" and selections by Ladow and Rimsky-Korsakoff.

Managerial Mysteries

To the Editor of The Tribune:  
Sir: "Loreley" is staged and sung well, as you remark this morning, and I quite agree with your general observation. One other point, suggested by my attendance last evening: Here is a rather lengthy piece, three acts, each running over fifty minutes. Then why the deuce do they start at 8:15?

FRANK M. TEED.  
New York, March 17.

Philadelphia Orchestra

At the Philadelphia Orchestra concert in Carnegie Hall next Tuesday evening the soloist will be Hans Kindler, formerly first cellist of that organization, who for the last three seasons has devoted himself exclusively to concert work. He will play the concerto in C major by Eugen d'Albert. The program will include "The Flying Dutchman" Overture, Mendelssohn's "Scottish" Symphony and Richard Strauss's tone poem, "Death and Transfiguration."

Friends of Music

Harold Bauer will be the soloist at the last concert of the Friends of Music at Town Hall this afternoon at 3:30. A special program has been arranged for the occasion which will enlist the services of the Chorus of the Friends of Music. Mr. Bauer will play the Bach concerto in A minor, which was written for flute and violin as well as the piano. Brahms's "Song of Fate," Op. 54, for orchestra and chorus, will be given, as well as Mozart's Symphony in C major (Koechel No. 838).

The Dolings of Cummings

"Fires of Vengeance" is the working title of a big feature picture which Irving Cummings is making. The cast reads like "Who's Who." It includes Noah Beery, Lon Chaney, Jack Mulhall, Ralph Lewis, Edith Roberts, De Witt Jennings and Kate Price. The story is by Hope Lohring. Mr. Cummings is an erstwhile leading man who will, so he says, direct and produce in the future.

Carey Wilson With Goldwyn

Carey Wilson has been made associate editor of the Goldwyn scenario department. Mr. Wilson joined the staff of Goldwyn three months ago, after his story, "Captain Blackbird," had been purchased. He has since furnished the originals, "This Way Out" and "Women Love Diamonds." Mr. Wilson will work with Ralph Block, Bern Bern and Clayton Hamilton.

Urban Scenery at Rivoli

The stage settings and costumes in "A Hindu Prayer" are from designs by Joseph Urban. This will be presented at the Rivoli Theater as a prologue to "Beauty's Worth," Marion Davies's newest picture. Eduardo Albano and three Hindu dancers will appear in the prologue.

New Fox Trot for Constance

Maurice and Constance Talmadge have invented a new fox trot and have named it "The Constance." Miss Talmadge was once a classical dancer, and if she had not been a success in the films, she says she should have adopted ballroom dancing as a profession.

"School Days" in Sing Sing

Harry M. Winkitsky, director of entertainments at Sing Sing, has written a most enthusiastic letter to Harold Rodner thanking him for allowing them to show "School Days" to the prisoners.

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## Some New Offerings in The Theaters of Paris

**Nearly Seventy Playhouses Now in Operation in the French Capital; Theater Daunou the Newest**

By Wilbur Forrest

PARIS, March 15.  
THE sixty-odd Parisian theaters have now jumped nearly to the seventy mark with the simultaneous advent of "Une Sacrée Petite Blonde"—most literally "A Little Blond Devil"—and the Theatre Daunou. Jane Renouard, the well known Parisian actress, is responsible for both, having followed in the footsteps of Sarah Bernhardt and Rejane, who set Paris talking years ago by opening their own playhouses. Renouard follows with two small diversions, placed in an underground setting about a block from the Opéra, a few steps from Ciro's and the Café de Paris.

"Une Sacrée Petite Blonde," by Albert Wolff and André Birabeau, is an ultra-Parisian piece appropriate for the opening of any Paris theater. Just how Parisian it is may be noted from the following thumb-nail of the plot:

François Calais, a playwright, is married to Sylvette (Renouard). François and Sylvette have an apartment with a balcony. It is quite natural, therefore, that François leans over his balcony. On the next balcony he sees Aline (Mlle. Marken), the small blond person aforementioned. Now, François, one of those men of that peculiar make-up who never see a good looking, petite blonde without falling in love—matrimony elsewhere notwithstanding. Aline flirts so extremely, anyway, that François lets no barrier intervene, and he steps, or rather climbs, from his balcony to hers. Here enters Simeon, Aline's gentleman friend, who had been absent. Aline had not taken François seriously and had left the apartment on a shopping trip.

The second act takes place in Aline's apartment. It had been all right with Simeon—a stupid fellow—if François called, and by the time the second act rolled around he had become well acquainted with Aline, as well as Simeon, and was spending most of his time there. In the mean time, Sylvette—over home next door, or rather next balcony—had been suspecting the truth. Knowing the idiosyncrasies of her mercurial spouse and intuitively feeling that the "Little Blond Devil" attraction for him was only temporary, she began to play her subtle hand. Instead of objecting to his over-the-balcony advances she facilitated them in the hope that he would tire of the blond person sooner. Aline, however, would consent to flee with François only in the event that Simeon was untrue to her. Now, being a stupid fellow, Simeon led an exemplary life. At length, however, Sylvette sensed the situation and wrote a letter to Aline denouncing this simple Simeon. Aline believed the letter and fled with François.

A New Play By Henri Bataille

As most all birds and lepidoptera come home to roost, François returned to Sylvette a couple of days later a perfect Monsieur Butterfly. Whereupon, if the curtain had not fallen just at that time, it would have been perfectly obvious that the "Little Blond Devil" returned to her simple Simeon a much chastened and disillusioned Little Devil. "Le Chair Humaine" (Human Flesh?), by Henri Bataille, the noted French playwright and novelist, playing at the Vaudeville Theatre, is an example of the way that attracts Parisians. The title is misleading. It smacks of the Grand Guignol or a chamber of horrors. It should be "Sins of the Fathers" or something like that.

Twenty years before the Germans tore up Belgium's "scrap of paper" Jeanne Lavasseur, a young bourgeois, falls in love with Jeanne Boulard, a little Parisian seamstress. It was an attic love, and a man-child came to the attic to make life miserable for Lavasseur. He leaves and later makes a rich marriage, remembering Jeanne only by a small financial allowance.

She is broken hearted, but decides to devote her life to their boy. Twenty

years later—the European war. Lavasseur has become immensely wealthy from industries which he turns into munition factories. He now has a legitimate son in uniform, but who, with his father's influence, is spared from the front.

One day Jeanne, a prematurely aged seamstress, appears at the munitioner's palatial home to say that the natural son has been killed at the front. Lavasseur is greatly touched—his wife, ignorant of details, feels a great pity for the sad, bereft mother. Lavasseur tells his legitimate son, Pierre, of his former life, and Pierre, greatly wrought up, joins a front line regiment. The war over, Jeanne's son returns, having been a prisoner. He entered the army a weak and submissive lad, but comes out with a Bolshevik spirit which Hugh Wiley's "Wildcat" might describe as "Get 'em meat."

France owes him a living, and a good one, for what he has suffered, he tells the world, including, incidentally, M. Lavasseur. The latter promises to keep both Jeanne and the boy in his own home. But here are strong words between the two women. Jeanne and her son eventually decide to abandon radical tactics, take their monthly due and live quietly away from the Lavasseur household.

A Humorous Writes A Melodrama

The French public have accepted Henri Bataille's latest work with an enigmatic enthusiasm which the majority of French critics fail to understand. The latter desire that M. Bataille should have put a little more "pep" into Jeanne's young, radical soldier son. A French economist might say that even French theater audiences sympathize with the wisdom of accepting a safe and steady income as against radicalism. Perhaps that is the moral that Bataille tries to point out.

Tristan Bernard, humorist, poet and playwright, has broken forth again with a melodramatic comedy which he calls "Mon Amour," at the Theatre Marigny. The plot is a tangle of detail wound tightly around 12,000,000 francs, a pretty ingenu and three cousins.

A bachelor uncle complicates his will with a proviso that his nephew Renaud must marry the uncle's natural daughter Jeanne to inherit the money. Otherwise, two other nephews, Lucas and Merlin, are to share the fortune.

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M. Tristan Bernard has little trouble with this introduction to keep his audience on their toes. Lucas and Merlin wear the false whiskers in the play. They are the villains who quite obviously have an interest in keeping Renaud away from Jeanne, whom the author tells us is living with a guardian in a small provincial town and giving English lessons for a living. Renaud has never seen her. Nevertheless, she is clever and pretty.

**Davies and the Dooleys at Rivoli in 'Beauty's Worth'**

The old-fashioned charade comes into its own in "Beauty's Worth," the Cosmopolitan-Paramount production starring Marion Davies which comes to the Rivoli Theater for a week beginning to-day. Joseph Urban designed the settings and Miss Davies wears some striking costumes.

"Beauty's Worth" is from the story by Sophie Kerr and was directed by Robert G. Vignola. It tells the story of a demure Quaker maid who was transformed into a great social success through the magic of the dressmaker's needle.

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